SOLUTIONS FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

FM
FACILITY MANAGEMENT

WORKING SMART

Getting the most out of your work environment

RETURN TO WORK
How Zenith is attracting employees back to the office

SMART TECHNOLOGY
How does it help building managers

PLANNING AND MANAGING
Five practical tips for facilities managers

ISSUE 2 | 2022

VISIT…

Ensure the safety and comfort of building occupants, while lowering energy and operational costs

Protect People and Property

Increase Comfort

Optimise Operations

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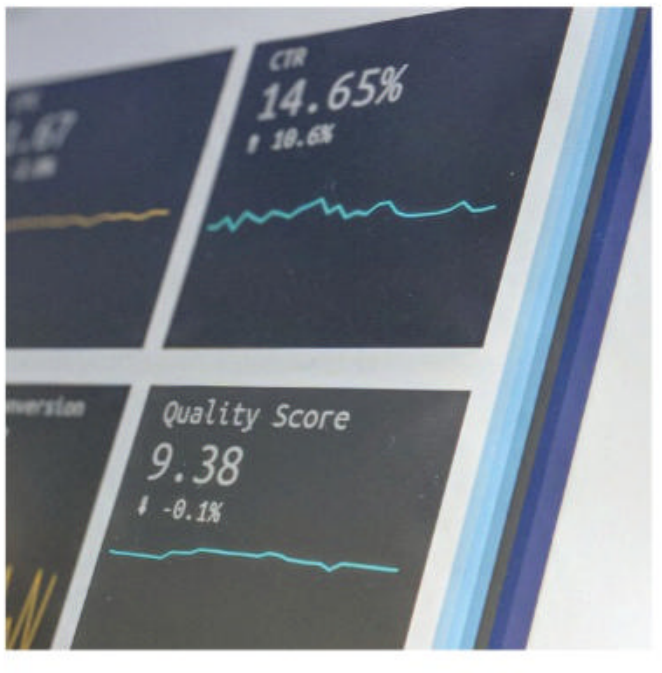

When we were all sent home in March of 2020, no one knew how long our home offices would remain our offices. Empty buildings stood on our horizons, once bustling with workers, these structures were now devoid of activity. But this year office workers slowly started to make their way back. City centres have begun to come alive, the once empty buildings are beginning to fill. As of June 2022, 70 percent of Melbourne's office workers have returned in a part of full time basis.

For this issue of *Facility Management*, we wanted to shift the focus back to the offices. We wanted to explore how different it is. What are the new focuses in these old spaces? When an office is only half full, how is this managed and looked after? How do you test air quality? How can you prevent breakouts happening in an office?

Alongside the new way of operating familiar offices, we went out and explored the new office - shared spaces. Popping up all over major cities, shared office spaces like WeWork and The Commons are workplaces of the future. *Facility Management* has spoken to leaders in this space, and how it's changing the space they work in.

Putting this issue together it was fascinating to be able to speak to those who are working behind the scenes to keep our office places sanitised, comfortable and of high quality, whether that be a new modern shared space or the familiar floor of the one we've worked at for yours.

Regards,
Liv

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Stock images courtesy of 123RF,
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Cover photography: Nastuh Abootalebi

FM online
– fmmedia.com.au
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FM is a publication of HH & M Media Pty Ltd,
a member of the Niche Group.
HH & M Media ABN 81 091 724 588
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Attracting employees back to the workspace with Zenith

Even though the specific challenges of the pandemic are decreasing, getting staff back into office spaces remains difficult for employers. But smart design can help.

The 'great resignation' in Australia appears to be morphing into the 'great return', with many employees rethinking their intentions to leave their jobs. Whether this is due to the simple necessity of putting food on the table and clothes on their backs, is hard to say, but across the country the trend is for a return to at least a semblance of how things were pre-pandemic.

For employers though, there are still many challenges. If they can find the staff in the first place, enticing them back into workplaces is proving to be a struggle. *The Age* recently investigated the outlook for offices in the city. In an article entitled 'Fast-forward obsolescence', the newspaper reported, "Melbourne's office occupancy rate remains stubbornly low, prompting grim predictions for downmarket CBD towers that few people want to work in."

So what can employers do to turn this around and create workspaces that their staff can't wait to occupy? Creative director of Zenith's Design Studio Oliver Field has some answers...

***FM*: How can the layout of a workspace reassure workers who are returning to the office after working from home for extended periods?**

Oliver Field: More spatial division, more sound absorbing materials and more individual centric settings will all help employees transition from their home workspace into the workplace. Employees who have been working from home over an extended period may have grown accustomed to spending time in solitude. The workplace will need to provide spaces where occupants can find respite from noise and distraction. Some may find that they need to retreat to these quiet spaces multiple times per day in order to achieve certain tasks.

What types of furniture and specific pieces would be best suited to the workplace during the second half of 2022?

Settings specifically designed for spontaneous teleconferencing and collaboration will offer a more private, less disruptive alternative to the

Verse Rooms, Sol-Sit Modular & Lois Collection

> **“In times of uncertainty, furniture that can be reconfigured in multiple ways becomes a tool for resilience.”**

team workstation cluster, without the need to occupy and book a meeting room. These settings will enable occupants to choose seated or standing postures. They will enable quick set-up, featuring seamless laptop compatibility with large format screens and multiple options for device charging.

High-performance space division pieces will help define workspace zones without creating enclosed rooms. They will also offer additional benefits, such as lockers, acoustic baffles, writable walls and planters.

Integrated technologies enable intelligent connectivity between people and furniture. Consider booking systems that can assist with the management of workspaces, sanitation notifications, way-finding and ergonomics.

How important is flexibility in workplace design right now?

In times of uncertainty, furniture that can be reconfigured in multiple ways becomes a tool for resilience. Enabling furniture assets to remain relevant through constant change offers huge economic benefits; for example, workstations that can accommodate fluctuations in team numbers in real time.

And what are the other most important considerations?

Task appropriateness is a huge design driver for furniture innovation; for example, workspaces that can not only accommodate, but also elevate the experience of using collaborative and digital work tools.

What sorts of products are currently being specified by designers doing workspace fitouts?

- large team tables that can accommodate changes in seating density when social distancing eases
- single occupant, enclosed rooms that feature good ventilation and acoustic performance
- furniture that is compatible with varying floor types; for example, access flooring, bolt to slab and floating
- small, lightweight stools that enable occupants to move and reposition easily – these allow people to control their proximity to others, and
- lightweight, movable and battery-enabled furniture; for example, large-format displays stands, writable walls and foldable desks – these can maximise the effectiveness of a room enabling it to become more relevant across multiple requirements.

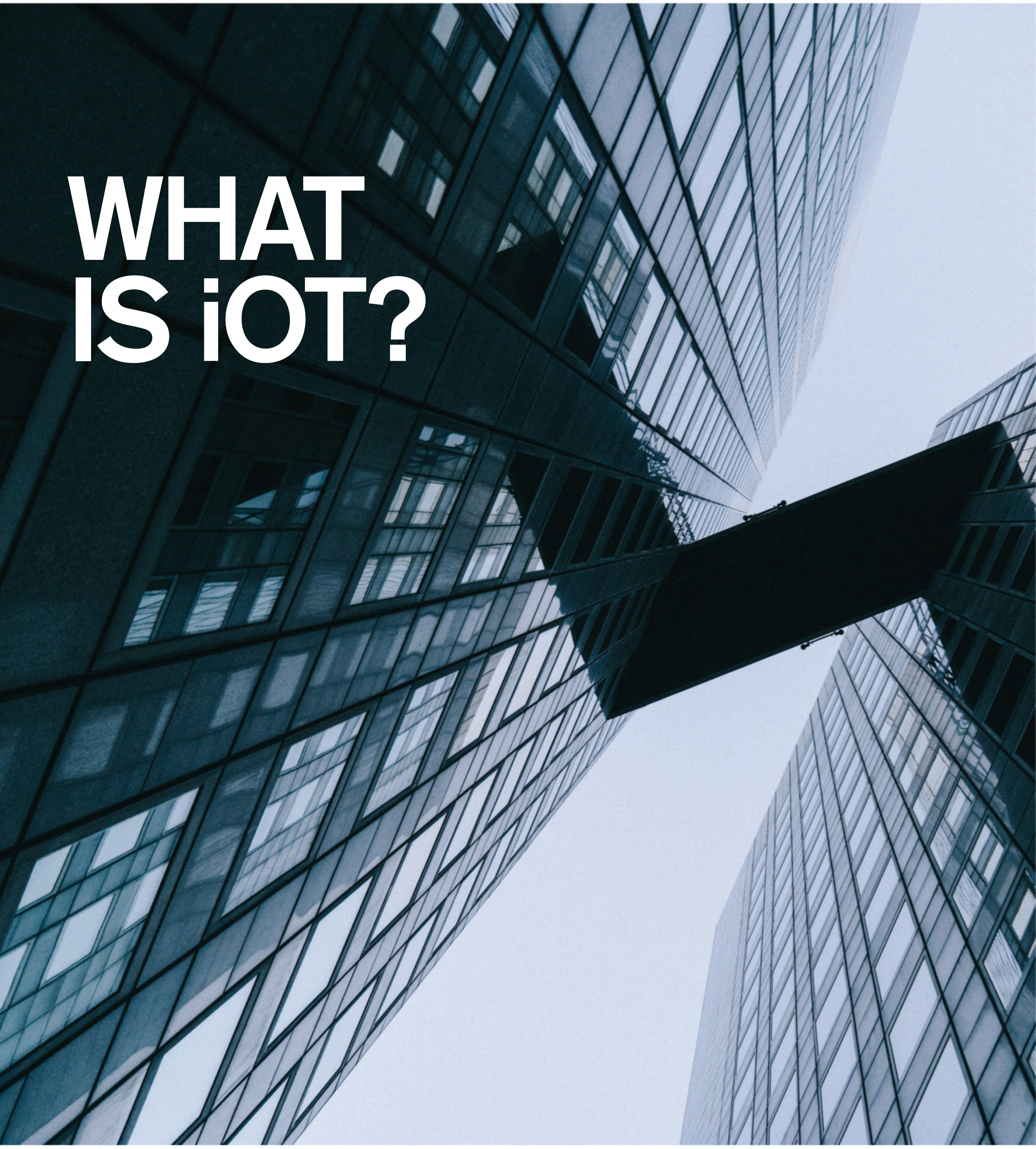
And what is Zenith hearing from the end users of these spaces about what their priorities are?

Getting people back into the office, reinjecting the workplace with discussion, information sharing and interaction between different disciplines and teams, and mixing and sharing information across different disciplines and teams. ●

Floorsense, Integrated technology into furniture

Kissen Conference Fold & Jac Chairs

WHAT IS iOT?



What is Integrated Operational Technology? CAMERON EXLEY from Grosvenor Engineering Group's (GEG) talks about how integrating technology into the facility can be a long-term cost effective solution.

Often confused with Information Technology, OT is the focus on behaviours and outcomes. Most control systems employed across industrial and manufacturing installations in the past weren't networked. The result? Siloed specialised devices, each electronic, but lacking the ability to communicate or share information with one another. This results in human operators to bridge these gaps.

NEW ROLES ESTABLISHED TO HELP WITH OT

At GEG, Cameron Exley has been brought on board as the Head of Technology Commercialisation. The role has been created to help customers working in facilities management to solve different tech challenges and differences within their operational technology environments. It's essential in streamlining these technologies and making sure that they are talking to one another.

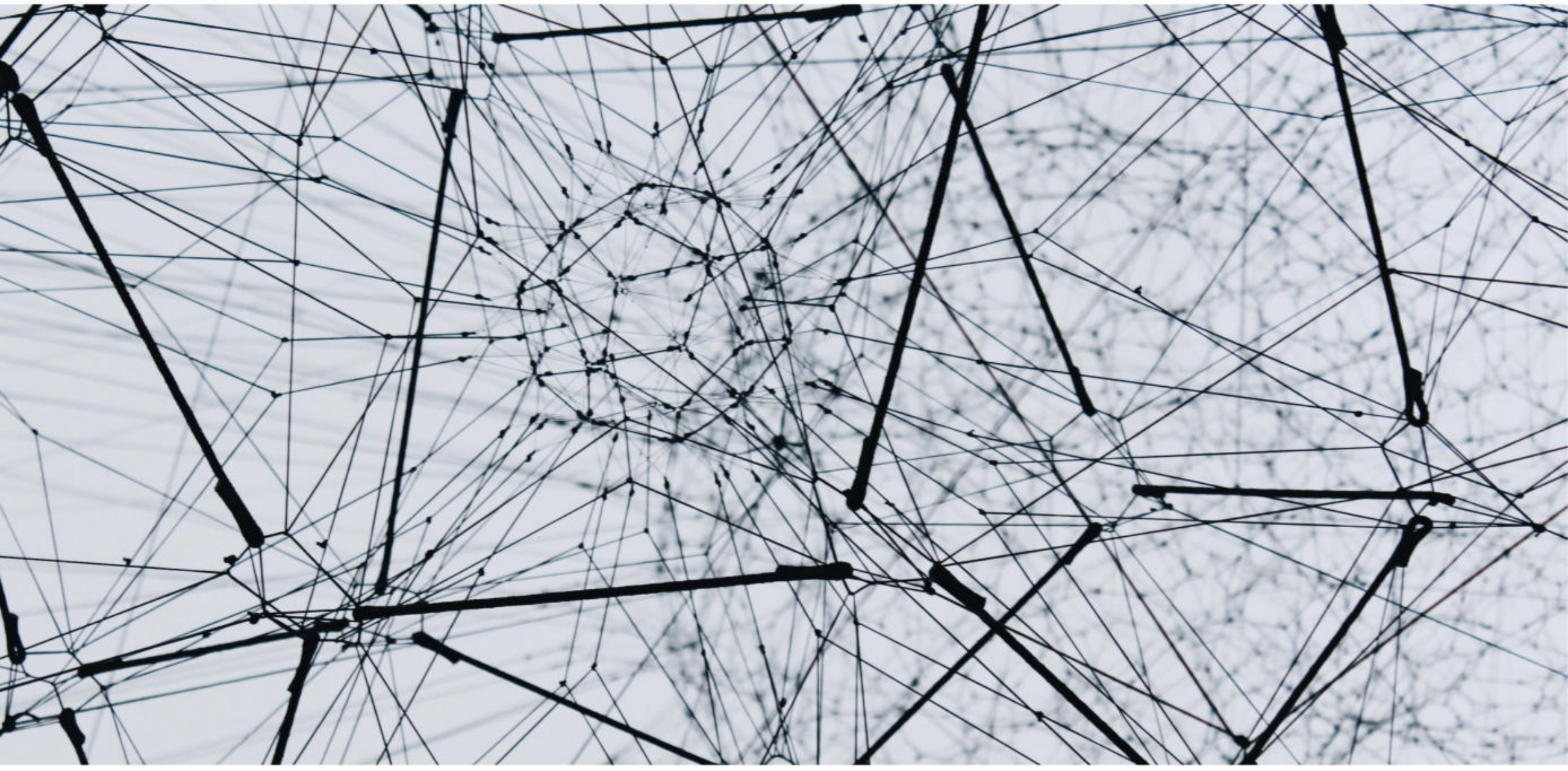
INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGIES

It's so important for these technologies to be able to read one another. This is done by aligning different resources in-house with traditional service lines. Combining teams to bring in the right players at the right time, and the problem is solved. Exley concentrates at searching for the best solution. It's important to him that businesses and organisations know that it's not always a tech upgrade.

WHAT IS INTEGRATED OPERATIONAL TECHNOLOGY?

Traditionally the OT environment has been sold as individual products. This includes CCTV systems, air conditioning and purifying, lighting, the list goes on. It was individual things that helped the operations of the building. But, with the tech advances, it's turning into an interesting space. The whole concept of Master Systems Integrator (MSI) was born and is starting to mature.

As an example, building managers and facility managers have been looking at air quality sensors a lot recently. With the pandemic and less bodies in the office, air quality has become so important, in addition to temperature. Integrating



> “There used to be no data to prove that there were savings to be had, but now there’s ways to prove that retroactively fitting things can (and will) be cost effective.”

operational technology will help with this: air quality sensors will talk to the air conditioner and improve comfort and efficiency, it will then measure the air quality, including particulate matter that includes VOCs and CO2 levels in the air and report back on the air quality. Customers are looking for things to operate holistically, and this is where we can assist. The newly appointed roles are to make sure that a single environment of technology ecosystem is created.

WHAT DOES GROSVENOR ENGINEERING GROUP LOOK TO ACHIEVE?

At GEG, there is a focus on four outcomes for building’s tenants. These are:

- **Reduce risk.** This is top of the funnel of importance. The health and safety of Grovesner’s building’s tenants. A need to assess failures, look at the commercial uses of the buildings. But it’s also about so much more than this. Part of risk reduction is looking at cyber risks. Cyber risks have become such a major player in people’s setup, huge companies have fallen victim to cyber breaches. Exley wants to provide assurance that people’s cyber safety is the best it can be.
- **Reduce expenditure.** But what does this mean? This is about showing tenants that a one time cost can mean huge savings over a period of time. Office places and commercial spaces are so different to what they once were, with less people coming in and out, more hybrid work. Maybe less lighting needs to be used, maybe an air conditioner needs to understand how many bodies there are in one room at a time, and minimise the power. These are the sort of things Exley chooses to focus on.
- **Improve environmental stance.** Sustainability is so important these days. And there is now technology that allows monitoring in much greater detail the energy usage in a building. GEG invented a system that would detail this, pre smart metres.
- **Reduce complaints.** Exley wants to have his tenants having no reason to say that their systems aren’t operating smoothly.

WHAT ARE THE HESITATIONS ABOUT INTEGRATING OPERATIONAL TECHNOLOGY?

There has always been some hesitation when it comes to adopting new technology. However, Exley sees this hesitation changing. The technology is coming down to an affordable price point now - tenants are able to see this as an affordable and worthwhile investment. There used to be no data to prove that there were savings to be had, but now there’s ways to prove that retroactively fitting things can (and will) be cost effective.

The industry is becoming more technology forward, and this is the way of the future. ●

Cameron Exley is the Head of Technology Commercialisation at Grosvenor Engineering Group.

SYDNEY VOTED IN WORLD'S TOP 10 MOST ACCESSIBLE CITIES

Over one billion people are estimated to live with a disability, according to the World Health Organisation, and that number is increasing.

Despite comprising about 15 percent of the world's population, people with a range of disabilities have to navigate hostile built environments daily. In fact, it's part of WHO's very definition of disability.

Valuable 500, a global collective of 500 CEOs and their companies that innovate together for disability inclusion, led a travel survey of 3500 people with a disability in August to September 2022.

The Accessible Cities Report explored the top 10 world cities that were voted 'most accessible by participants – and Sydney made the list.

"While no city can claim to be fully accessible – access needs are far too wide-ranging and diverse – there are several that deserve praise for the efforts that they are making," the report begins.

Travel writer Martin Heng offers insights throughout to provide deeper context around the accessibility of each city from his own firsthand experience as a quadriplegic.

LEADING DIGITAL FIELD MANAGEMENT PLATFORM ENTERS AUSTRALIA

PlanRadar, a global digital field management platform specifically for the global construction industry. Since its inception in 2013, the company has extended its footprint from its Austrian base to 65 countries.

In Australia alone it's estimated that building defects can cost the nation up to $2.5 billion annually. PlanRadar's success is fueled by the demand for the industry to run more efficiently as well as data driven. PlanRadar's regional lead Bart Crowther spoke about the expansion.

"Australia is a rapidly expanding new market for the PlanRadar business. We're starting to see strong interest across the construction sector for digital management solutions that can help manage the growing pipeline of building and infrastructure projects, especially where quality assurance and defect management are particularly rigorous."

PlanRadar's mobile, cloud-based technology increases transparency and efficiency at every stage of the build, from conception to completion, by giving contractors the power to markup designs, run instant reports, view BIM models and floor plans, and gain detailed insight into what is happening in real time.

Digitised workflow can help the industry increase efficiency and with that, profit. The platform also empowers users with the ability to seamlessly manage building information modelling (BIM) and plans into one location. This can then be accessed by users from mobile devices and ensures that everyone is working off the most current version of a plan.

REPORTING CAPABILITIES

A unique feature of PlanRadar is its reporting capabilities, with the ability to dive deeper into real-time data to create reports and pull out key project insights within seconds. The user can view, segment, and export live project data at any time to see project progress unfiltered and unedited. The platform also lets users sync documents and approvals across devices (regardless of location) to eliminate delays in document management.

PlanRadar is available now for businesses across Australia, with monthly or annual plans for every level of business including Basic, Starter, Pro, and Enterprise licenses.

How does smart building technology help facilities managers

Smart building technology is becoming an increasingly important tool for facilities managers. By automating tasks and collecting data, smart buildings can help reduce energy usage, optimise resources and improve occupant comfort.

Facilities managers have a lot on their plate; from ensuring the safety of employees and tenants to complying with regulations, there's always something to be done. Thankfully, new smart building technology can help make their job easier. This article covers how technology can benefit facilities managers and how they can get started with implementing it in their buildings.

WHAT IS SMART BUILDING TECHNOLOGY?

Smart building technology refers to the various systems and devices used to manage a building's energy use, resources and occupants. This can include lighting control systems, security systems, HVAC (heating, ventilation and air-conditioning) systems, and more.

To be considered 'smart', these systems must communicate and be controlled remotely. This allows for greater flexibility and efficiency in managing a building.

FOUR BENEFITS OF SMART BUILDING TECHNOLOGY FOR FACILITIES MANAGERS

So, how does smart building technology help facilities managers? Let's take a look at some of the key benefits:

1 IMPROVED BUILDING MANAGEMENT

With all systems connected, FMs can get a real-time overview of what's happening in the building. This includes things like energy usage, HVAC settings and security status. This data helps FMs to make informed decisions about optimising the building. For example, if the data shows that the HVAC system is being used more than necessary, the manager can make adjustments to reduce energy usage.

Smart building technology also helps FMs manage buildings more effectively and efficiently. By integrating various systems and data, FMs can both obtain a clear picture of the building's performance and identify opportunities for improvement.

Additionally, building maintenance management systems can streamline the scheduling of preventive maintenance tasks, reducing downtime and improving building reliability.

Overall, smart building technology helps improve communication and coordination between different departments within a facility, leading to better overall building management.

2 ENHANCED FLEXIBILITY AND REMOTE WORK

Before the Internet of Things (IoT), facilities managers had to be on-site to change the building's systems. Now, with smart building technology, they can do this remotely.

FMs used to rely on occupants to report issues like a broken light or an unresponsive elevator. Now, these issues can be detected and registered automatically with sensors and other connected devices. This allows for a quicker response time and improved occupant satisfaction.

By installing sensors and other data-gathering devices in their office buildings, companies can gain invaluable insights into how their space is used. FMs can use this information to make the space more flexible and accommodating to the needs of employees.

For example, if a company finds that its employees primarily work from home during the day, it may reallocate some of its

> **By providing real-time data and remote access to systems, FMs can work more efficiently and effectively with the help of smart building technology.**

office space to create more meeting rooms or quiet areas. Or, if a business finds that its employees are using certain areas of the office more often than others, it may choose to rearrange the furniture or add additional features to those areas.

This way, smart building technology can help businesses create workspaces more conducive to flexibility and remote work.

3 REAL-TIME DATA COLLECTION

Not only do FMs have to keep the building running smoothly, but they also have to make sure that it is comfortable for occupants and meets all safety regulations.

With the advent of smart building technology, however, facility managers can now get a real-time view of the inner workings of their buildings. This allows them to identify and fix problems before they cause significant disruptions. It also helps them to improve the efficiency of the building by pinpointing areas where energy is wasted.

In addition, FMs can also use smart building technology to collect data about the occupants of the building. This information can be applicable in improving the design of the space and making it more user-friendly.

As a result, smart building technology has the potential to transform the way facility managers work and use the data to make long-term decisions about maintenance and upgrades.

4 BETTER ORGANISATION AND COMMUNICATION WITH THE TEAM

Finally, every FM's goal is to create a comfortable and productive working environment for occupants. As a result, they may use smart building technology to assist them in reducing the amount of time they spend multitasking.

For example, real-time building system monitoring can help identify problems before they cause significant disruptions. In addition, the ability to access data remotely can allow facility managers to resolve issues that would otherwise require an on-site visit quickly.

Finally, mobile apps can help keep everyone on the team on the same page, regardless of location. By harnessing the power of smart building technology, facility managers can achieve a higher level of organisation and communication with their teams.

CONCLUSION

By providing real-time data and remote access to systems, FMs can work more efficiently and effectively with the help of smart building technology.

In addition, this technology can create more flexible workspaces and collect data about occupants.

Ultimately, by leveraging the power of smart building technology, facility managers can provide more comfortable and productive working environments for everyone. ●

Bryan Christiansen is the founder and CEO of Limble CMMS. Limble is a modern, easy-to-use mobile CMMS software that takes the stress and chaos out of maintenance by helping managers organise, automate and streamline their maintenance operations.

The rise, fall and rise again of coworking

Co-working spaces were launching and expanding across major cities everywhere prior to the pandemic.

Thanks to technological advancements and changes in the labour market, remote and flexible work had become more commonplace. Freelancers, 'solopreneurs' and start-ups, seeking community and amenities, flocked to this 'third workplace' between the office and the home.

As a result, the second half of the 2010s saw aggressive growth in the sector. A 2019 survey by the co-working magazine *Deskmag* found the number of spaces globally increased from 8900 in 2015 to 22,000 in 2019.

This disruptive new organisational form had some saying the future was flexible, with optimists in the industry predicting almost a third of corporate real estate portfolios would comprise flexible space by 2030.

Then came the 'great disruptor': COVID-19. The rapid proliferation of co-working spaces suddenly ground to a halt.

In Melbourne, eventually to become the most locked down city in the world, the situation was 'desperate' for local operators. Some, like depo8 in Prahran, jumped ship early in the pandemic and closed altogether. In the inner eastern suburb of Richmond, LaunchPad stayed open even though its occupancy dropped from 80 percent just pre-pandemic to 10 percent at its depths.

"When all the uncertainty started, no one was moving into co-working spaces, so the name of the game was trying to keep the members you had," LaunchPad's co-founder David Thomas tells *Facility Management*.

The short-term forecast was grim, but the industry looked hopefully to the horizon for an even bigger boom post-COVID. The logic went, with more people working at home, a permanent hybrid workforce would lead to an uptake of co-working spaces long term.

So, have those predictions come to pass?

According to the industry's new peak body, Flexible Workspace Australia (FWA), all markets have experienced a bounce-back after the height of the pandemic, albeit differently from state to state, the CBD to the suburbs and mid-tier to premium spaces.

"Melbourne is having a positive bounce, but is lagging [behind] the rest of the country due in large part to the greater [number] of people and days being worked from home, and government restrictions and recommendations," says FWA's co-chair Fiona Mayor.

"Most other cities and states are now at pre-pandemic levels or beyond."

With the labour market currently tipping in the worker's favour, changes to employee

“With the labour market currently tipping in the worker’s favour, changes to employee expectations have also brought about new trends in co-working.”

expectations have also brought about new trends in co-working. For many, short commutes have become important to achieving a better work/life balance, says Mayor.

“Suburban and fringe locations have filled up faster than CBD locations, while regional locations are mixed,” she says.

In keeping with those trends, Hub Australia recently opened three ‘city fringe’ locations in Melbourne to provide more work-near-home options. The company’s chief property officer John Preece says 85 percent is the industry-standard occupancy rate as society moves out of COVID-19.

LaunchPad’s occupancy is not quite there yet, recently passing 50 percent, but its average tenure is back above 12 months.

This is despite spaces cutting all use of contracts in favour of a ‘truly flexible model’. LaunchPad’s owners made this unique decision in July 2020, as they found risk averse businesses had no interest in signing long-term contracts in unpredictable times.

“If [tenants] decide to leave, they could stand up tomorrow and walk out the door, and their total commitment is the end of the last invoice they paid,” Thomas says.

Greater flexibility could be attractive to large CBD organisations that have not yet returned to a Monday to Friday on-site operation. While early predictions of the office’s death may have been exaggerated, the pandemic has forced some companies to reassess their CRE (corporate real estate) portfolios and incorporate shared offices.

LaunchPad tends to avoid these large enterprises. A self-described ‘quirky’ co-working space in the middle of the price range, it targets businesses of two to 10 people looking to grow. In Thomas’ eyes, the more conservative big corporates are starting to “fundamentally change” the culture of other co-working spaces.

“It’s become more, if you like, isolationist,” he says.

“The companies that are in there are not the sort of companies that will plug into a shared community. So it’s almost like the wrong demographic. But that’s just my opinion.”

At the other end of the spectrum, some large companies are trying to incorporate co-working culture into their traditional office locations. Facility managers are looking at ways to mimic some of the lessons of co-working, like activity-based working, in order to ‘earn the commute’ of employees.

“If anything, there will be a first mover advantage for the organisations that really lean into this and walk the talk around giving choice, flexibility and options to their employees,” says Lawrence Goldstone, a PwC partner and investor in a Melbourne co-working business.

In Goldstone’s opinion, there is currently a lack of activation and engagement in traditional office environments.

“Co-work companies (as an industry) by their very nature, have an advantage in that they treat customers like guests, while businesses treat their people like employees. This is a fundamental difference in the style and approach around making spaces work.”

Whether managing, moving into or mining ideas from co-working spaces, FMs can certainly learn a lot about servicing employee and business needs from this industry in the new world of work. ●

Buildings, sustainability and challenges

Boosting performance in the face of building vacancies and COVID-19

COVID-19 and building vacancies mean sustainability efforts are more challenging than ever. But what does peak performance look like and how do you get there?

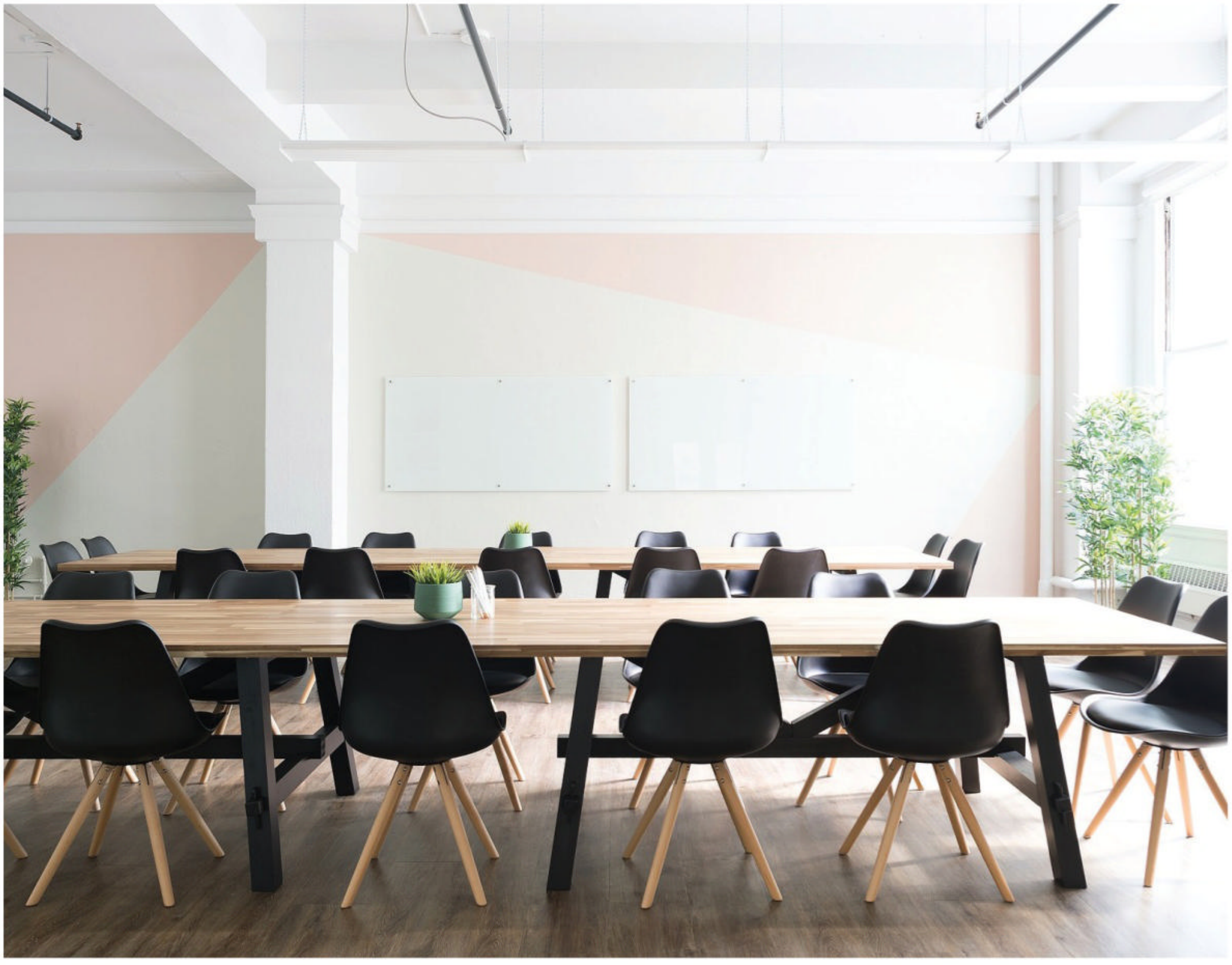
Sustainability is at the forefront of more and more conversations today. NABERS is publicising and building interest in its new Climate Active Carbon Neutral Certification. Since its introduction, there has been interest from some major players to improve their building ratings.

Embracing sustainability and improving green ratings is never a small task, it always takes considerable investment and planning. But it's particularly challenging right now, when things are not static in the industry. Everyone has been affected to some degree by COVID-19. Many office buildings, for example, have some level of vacancy throughout and, depending on the size of the building, you may have a handful of vacancies. Ensuring your building is able to effectively ramp down, so it is operating as efficiently as possible despite the reduced capacity, then becomes the goal. And it's tied closely to the design of the building. If it's not capable of actually reducing to whatever new configuration it has, this will be reflected with a poorer rating.

You'll see this more in older buildings. Perhaps they're not designed to be as flexible in terms of their HVAC. They may not have all the controls, and it may not be as straightforward to shut down their systems floor-by-floor. Settings may instead control multiple floors at a time. If it's not possible to shut down air-conditioning in areas not in use, they'll just have to take the hit as part of their ratings, or try to reduce elsewhere.

In many older buildings, too, a lot of these systems are controlled manually. It's not necessarily an ideal situation and can make things more challenging. It means you'll have to know what specific piece of equipment is consuming energy when not in use, and, sometimes, you'll have to manually go and shut it down yourself. At some point you then have to manually switch it on or get it working again when needed, which can be costly in itself.

But in any building, no matter when it was completed, there are things you can do to track, analyse and enhance operations. In an ideal space,



> **“Someone who can identify opportunities, who can put building managers in touch with experts in particular fields for improved NABERS ratings and sustainability efforts can prove invaluable.”**

everything in every location can be controlled, everything works properly and everything links up to the one system and can be controlled centrally (or remotely). Systems will work in harmony with each other, and don’t fight against each other, so you won’t see things like one room heating and one room cooling right next to one another.

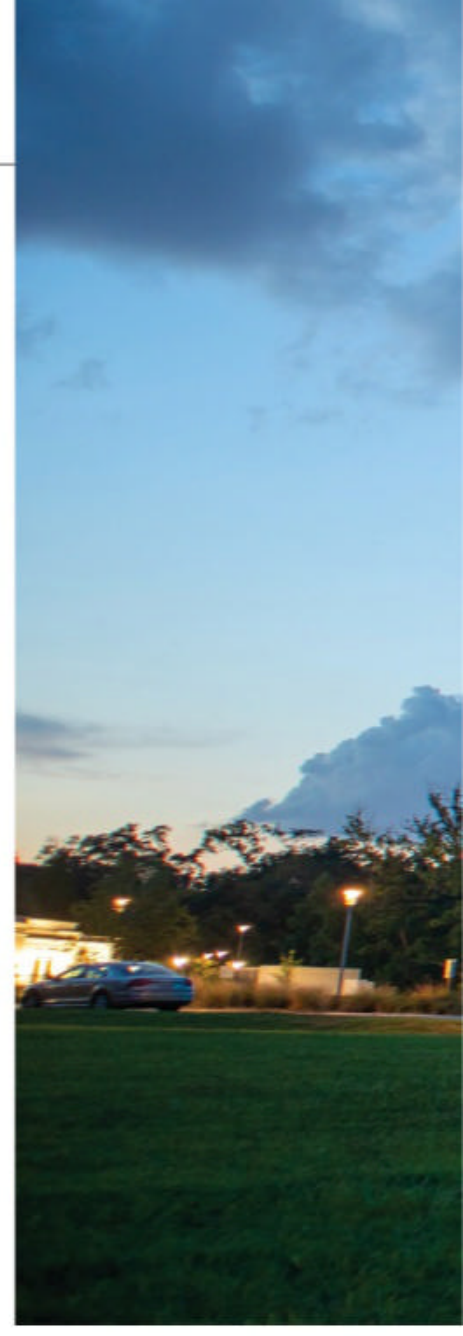
The optimum level of control is the potential to be able to shut it down by zone levels within floors. Some floors may have multiple tenants, so you need to be able to control HVAC tenant by tenant and floor by floor. It may not work in that sense in practice, it all depends on how things are designed and put together. But in theory, that’s what you want: to be able to control it zone by zone, floor by floor, and then be able to implement those HVAC configurations against the total building’s profile. So you would then see the floor within the entire building so to speak, as well. Someone who can identify opportunities, who can put building managers in touch with experts in particular fields for improved NABERS ratings and sustainability efforts can prove invaluable. You may need the guidance of a BMS contractor, or an analytics leader if you want to go in depth with your numbers. Not everyone you work with will play a direct part in actioning sustainability changes, but may instead help you find the right people and put you in touch with the firm that can implement the solutions. So seeking help could be a good first step.

BUILDING CULTURE

The culture from building to building varies. Embedding a culture of measuring and validating performance is something we try to encourage. It’s really one of the only ways you’re going to know how your building is performing – measuring, validating, then together evaluating what you’re doing right or wrong. The appetite for this level of collaboration also varies from building to building, but I think it is increasing overall, even if it’s more from a space of necessity as opposed to concern for environmental factors. If your rating is poor, people will say, ‘What can we do to improve it?’ So it’s not always a passion, just a thing people in a building must actually do to improve performance. ●

Jake Xerri is Sustainability Manager, NSW, at Grosvenor Engineering Group.

Planning and managing office space: five practical tips for facility managers



No workplace configuration is permanent as needs and habits change. BRYAN CHRISTIANSEN outlines ways to manage it better all the time.

When 'office planning' is mentioned, most people imagine that it is simply a matter of accommodating everything and everyone on the premises. Yet, planning and managing an office involves much more than just finding a place to keep everything. Planning an office space, and then managing it, are both strategic actions that lay the groundwork for productivity and smooth operations in any organisation.

Interestingly, these duties fall within the many responsibilities of a facility manager. If you're an FM and are wondering how to plan and manage your office space better, keep reading for five straightforward and practical tips that can help you to accomplish that.

1 ASSESS YOUR CURRENT SITUATION

Measurement precedes any kind of improvement. It's important to measure and understand the current position before you can hope to make positive and sustainable changes. That said, when planning a workspace, it wouldn't make sense to disrupt or change areas that already work perfectly well. FMs should start any space improvement project by determining what spaces are being under- or overutilised first, before making changes. Without taking a step back to assess where you are and where you want to be, it's hard to define the measurable goals to establish the desired outcome and improve the end result.

For instance, after assessing your current office space usage, you could find that the meeting rooms are always booked or busy. That's useful information. However, you may need to dig deeper because that information doesn't present the complete picture yet. What if further enquiries show that staff are actually using those meeting spaces for quick informal discussions away from their desks because there is no other suitable space? In that case, wouldn't it be better and more cost-effective to designate a few informal sit-out areas for those ad hoc discussions?

In essence, taking a step back to measure and plan ensures that you're not plunging into a workplace redesign project with no measurable goals or any idea whether your time and effort invested in this project will pay off or not.

2 ADOPT MODERN TOOLS AND SOLUTIONS

There's a lot that goes into planning and managing optimal office space. Yet it doesn't need to be an overwhelming task to adopt the right tools from inception. In order to finish an office planning project with minimal inconveniences and errors, consider deploying a few key technological solutions, especially the following:

- **CAFM:** Computer-aided facility management (CAFM) is a robust digital platform designed to enable its users to achieve the management of building-related logistical tasks seamlessly. CAFM empowers FMs to manage several key business activities simultaneously. These activities range from everyday tasks like logistics planning to move management, desk space usage, conference room allocation and much more.
- **CMMS:** Once everything is planned in line with your needs, you'll need help with maintaining the space and all the physical assets that help to keep staff productive – from servicing the HVAC units to keeping the conveniences tidy and safe. That's where a computerised maintenance management system (CMMS) comes in. This software will serve as a centralised platform that enables you to track, monitor and manage every single maintenance-related task or activity.
- **Desk booking software:** The option of allowing employees to work wherever they feel most productive

has quickly become a workplace norm. Desk booking software is an excellent tool to facilitate this new way of working. Facility managers can tap into the capabilities of desk booking software to automate and streamline the allocation of spaces and desks in hybrid working arrangements. That way they'll ensure that every worker's needs are met.

The advent of the above solutions means that now, more than ever before, FMs have the best tools to quickly and efficiently plan and manage today's office spaces optimally.

3 OPTIMISE IEQ

No matter how well-planned an office may be, poor indoor environmental quality (IEQ) will severely hamper everyone's productivity. FMs can overcome this challenge by focusing on the major contributing factors that impact the indoor environment especially:

- **Indoor temperature:** this directly impacts staff comfort and productivity, with most people performing at their best at temperatures from 21 to 22 degrees Celsius. To help control indoor temperature better, facility managers can research solutions like smart HVAC systems and install appropriate units according to their building's requirements.
- **Lighting:** for a long time, neuroscientists have made a strong connection between adequate lighting (especially natural light) and its effect on sleep and quality of life. FMs can try taking such steps as incorporating as much natural lighting (via windows and skylights) as possible into their office buildings, and using softer lighting that won't cause glare or eyestrain for workers.

Other aspects of IEQ worth monitoring include indoor air quality and noise management.

4 ENGAGE THE STAFF DURING THE PROCESS

Studies from sources like the Harvard Business Review have emphasised the need to involve employees in the office planning process. This makes sense because workers spend most of their day in the office – so make sure to ask staff for their observations, inputs and ideas regarding what kind of improvements they want to see around them. The information presented by these studies show that employee performance and motivation improve when they can control their workspace layout, since involving them encourages a culture of autonomy.

5 MONITOR AND REASSESS

No workplace configuration is ever permanent. As time passes, the layout and the decisions made will usually change as employee preferences change and as new staff come onboard. Facility managers need to put a system in place to help them reassess the current situation, cross-check that the workspace still meets workers' needs and that there are no major deviations. A quarterly checklist or some other resource will assist with this.

Workplace planning and management can often seem tricky to execute, primarily because of the need to satisfactorily incorporate the individual needs of staff.

With the backing of a thorough plan, however, the right organisational support, and the adequate alignment of tools and technology to optimise productivity, it can be done just right – leaving workers satisfied, creative and more motivated. ●

Bryan Christiansen is the founder and CEO of Limble CMMS.

Time for a raise?

Hays Salary Guide 2022 takes a look at the salaries, employment prospects and jobs landscape for facility managers. Here's FM's analysis.

In facility management, and across the board, the jobs market is currently shaped and defined by a skills shortage. In his introduction to the 'Hays Salary Guide Australia and New Zealand 2022/'23', Hays managing director for the region Nick Deligiannis says it's at a level unmatched in Hays' 46 years of recruitment. A whopping 91 percent of employers are experiencing a skills shortage, compared to 70 percent in the last peak of 2019.

Statistics like these, considered in the context of the pandemic and all of the disruption, uncertainty, remote working it has introduced, of course give way to talk of the 'great resignation'. The fluid job market and high demand for skills would certainly suggest it's a reality, though Deligiannis says the survey results show things aren't as dire as feared for employers.

"While candidates do have a high intent to move, with more than half of respondents indicating that they are open to new opportunities in the year ahead, thinking about changing jobs and actively applying are two distinct things," says Deligiannis. This may not feel too reassuring for employers in the facility management industry, 39 percent of whom believe the great resignation will accelerate, 45 percent of whom plan to increase headcount and 80 percent of whom believe skills shortages will impact operations or growth. As always, better salaries (more on that soon) and conditions are the right ways to keep the best talent. For FM, it appears to be a dollars game, but there are other ways to win loyalty too. Speaking about the whole employment market, Deligiannis says, "Businesses need to consider how they can position themselves as an employer of choice.

"Yes, ensuring your salary offering is competitive is one part of the equation; however, employees that are happy and productive aren't just motivated by money." Flexibility, training, purpose and culture are hugely important. "We now have the perfect opportunity to come together to define this new equation, in a way that benefits everyone," says Deligiannis.

PAY UP

Eighty-two percent of facilities management employers will increase salaries in their next review in the 2022-'23 financial year. Of them, 59

	Bid manager	Building manager	Catering manager	Cleaning area manager	Cleaning operations manager	Contracts manager	Control room operator	Engineering manager	Environmental health officer	Facilities coordinator
NSW Sydney	**204** 153-255	**77** 75-95	**87** 82-92	66-82	82-102	**122** 112-153	56-66	**122** 112-153	82-100	**71** 65-75
NSW Regional	**204** 153-255	**71** 65-80	**71** 71-82	66-82	82-102	**102** 82-122	56-66	**112** 102-133	82-100	**65** 55-75
VIC Melbourne	**184** 112-235	**85** 71-87	**82** 77-87	**77** 66-82	**112** 82-122	**112** 82-122	**62** 55-65	**122** 82-153	70-90	**70** 65-75
VIC Regional	**184** 112-235	**85** 71-87	**82** 77-87	**77** 66-82	**112** 82-122	**112** 82-122	**62** 55-65	**122** 82-153	70-90	**71** 61-71
QLD – Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast	**163** 122-204	**80** 80-90	**77** 71-87	**70** 65-80	**87** 77-107	**112** 75-125	**56** 56-61	87-143	**80** 75-100	**65** 55-70
QLD Regional	**163** 112-194	**65** 60-70	**77** 71-92	**66** 61-77	**87** 77-102	**92** 75-110	**56** 56-61	82-133	**80** 75-100	**56** 49-60
SA Adelaide	**133** 112-189	**80** 70-90	**71** 71-82	**61** 61-71	**77** 77-92	**110** 90-130	**60** 51-65	**97** 90-130	**75** 70-80	**75** 60-80
WA Perth	**160** 153-184	**80** 75-80	**95** 77-100	**95** 77-100	**87** 71-92	**133** 133-153	**61** 56-66	**133** 122-163	**89** 68-100	**70** 65-75
ACT Canberra	**204** 153-255	**77** 71-82	**71** 66-77	66-82	**92** 82-102	**133** 102-153	**56** 51-61	**133** 102-153	**80** 75-100	**61** 56-75
TAS – Hobart/ Launceston	**122** 102-148	**72** 69-80	N/A	N/A	N/A	**102** 87-117	**56** 51-66	87-102	**66** 66-75	**55** 51-68
NT Darwin	130-220	**71** 66-82	N/A	N/A	N/A	**110** 90-150	**60** 55-65	**100** 75-135	N/A	**70** 62-82

percent say the skills shortage has forced them to offer higher salaries than otherwise planned.

Hays says the skills shortages have created an unusual market, where more FM professionals will receive a pay rise than last year, 52 percent feel confident to ask for a pay rise and 45 percent of employers intend to increase FM headcount.

Ninety percent of employers are experiencing a skills shortage, says the report. “This is fuelling a once-in-a-career market,” says Austin Blackburne, regional director of Hays Facilities Management. “Previously camouflaged by skilled migration, and further impacted by headcount growth, skills shortages have reached a level unmatched in our years in recruitment and sparked deliberate salary increases from employers.”

Only 23 percent of FM employees are happy with their current pay and an uncompetitive salary is the top factor motivating 57 percent of job searches.

While a wage rise may be on the cards, don’t get your hopes up too high: only 18 percent of employers plan to increase salary by more than three percent, and 64 percent will increase salaries by less than three percent. Seventy-six percent of FM professionals Hays spoke to feel their performance and the demand for their skills merit an increase greater than three percent.

“While both the value and extent of salary increases are rising, employees’ expectations are growing faster,” says Blackburne. “In a job-rich, candidate-poor market, they feel more assured of their worth and have prioritised a pay rise.”

Uncompetitive salary ranked as the top factor motivating job searches, ahead of poor benefits and negative mental health and well-being impacts. Hays recommends that recruiters also consider benefits, up-skilling, career progression, purpose and good relationships when trying to stand out as their preferred candidate’s first choice. ●

A quick look

THE TOP FIVE SKILLS IN DEMAND IN FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

1. facilities managers
2. facilities coordinators
3. maintenance managers
4. asset managers
5. project managers

TOP FACTORS DRIVING TURNOVER

1. poor benefits
2. an uncompetitive salary
3. lack of promotional opportunities
4. poor management style or workplace culture
5. negative mental health and well-being impacts

THE TOP THREE BENEFITS SOUGHT BY FM PROFESSIONALS

1. company car, car allowance or on-site parking
2. training
3. more than 20 days’ annual leave

Source: Hays ‘Salary Guide FY ‘22/‘23’.
Salaries are in thousands, in Australian dollars, and are listed exclusive of superannuation. Bold number represents ‘typical’ salary, the figure offered most commonly by employers at time of publication, and the numbers beneath represent the salary range.

	Facilities helpdesk	Facilities manager	Facilities officer	General manager	Guest services agent	Operations manager	Parking officer	Ranger	Security manager	Service manager	Social environmental health officer
NSW Sydney	**66** 56-71	**122** 82-153	**56** 51-65	**184** 133-255	56-66	**133** 122-153	62-72	75-85	**71** 71-82	**122** 102-153	120-140
NSW Regional	**61** 51-66	**102** 82-133	**56** 51-62	**184** 122-255	56-66	**112** 102-122	60-70	70-80	**71** 71-82	**102** 82-122	120-140
VIC Melbourne	**65** 60-75	**115** 100-120	**60** 60-65	**153** 102-204	**60** 55-65	**117** 87-117	**60** 60-81	**90** 85-95	**78** 75-85	**112** 77-122	75-115
VIC Regional	**61** 56-66	**115** 100-120	**60** 60-65	**122** 112-158	**60** 55-65	**117** 77-117	**60** 58-70	85-90	**78** 75-85	**112** 66-112	75-115
QLD – Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast	**60** 50-60	**100** 90-125	**65** 55-75	**133** 95-160	**56** 51-56	**110** 95-125	**60** 60-65	**60** 60-65	**66** 66-77	**115** 85-133	90-110
QLD Regional	**55** 50-63	**95** 80-110	**56** 48-61	**122** 112-158	**56** 51-56	**90** 80-100	**60** 60-65	**60** 60-65	**66** 66-79	**92** 66-117	90-110
SA Adelaide	**51** 46-56	**100** 85-110	**60** 55-65	**153** 130-200	**51** 46-56	**100** 90-120	**60** 55-65	**60** 60-65	**75** 66-85	**100** 90-120	**95** 85-100
WA Perth	**56** 51-66	**102** 87-125	**60** 51-70	**145** 120-180	**55** 51-60	**122** 102-128	**75** 60-90	**70** 62-80	**75** 66-80	**122** 112-143	**110** 95-120
ACT Canberra	**51** 42-56	**102** 82-125	**61** 51-61	**153** 102-184	**56** 51-56	**122** 122-153	**65** 60-70	**65** 60-70	**77** 71-82	**153** 122-168	**110** 100-130
TAS – Hobart/ Launceston	N/A	**55** 51-68	**68** 56-69	**122** 102-153	**51** 51-56	**102** 82-122	N/A	**60** 60-65	**71** 71-82	**90** 77-120	N/A
NT Darwin	N/A	**70** 62-82	**60** 55-65	**122** 112-148	**55** 50-55	**133** 97-163	N/A	N/A	**68** 65-75	**110** 100-140	N/A

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

WHEN: 2 December 2022
WHERE: Online
www.waset.org

PROPERTY FIRE INFORMATION SESSION

WHEN: 3 December 2022
WHERE: Gulf Savannah, Mareeba, QLD
www.eventbrite.com.au/o/qfbc-33731471951

SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION ESSENTIALS

WHEN: 14 December 2022
WHERE: Waterman Eastland, Ringwood, VIC
www.sustainnovate.com.au/events/

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

WHEN: 29 March 2023
WHERE: Sydney, NSW
www.waset.org

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FACILITIES MANAGEMENT AND SERVICES

WHEN: 17 May 2023
WHERE: Sydney, NSW
www.waset.org